

THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



October 1976, Vol. XIII, No. 1



“Here comes the Weston High School Bicentennial Band!” See editorial on page 2.

ANNUAL MEETING — November 11th

Howard Gambrill's Slide Talk

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the ballroom of the Josiah Smith Tavern at 8 P.M. on Thursday, November 11th. After a short business meeting, Mr. Howard Gambrill will present a slide talk on the interesting stage by stage development of “Let the House Tell You” concept of the Golden Ball Tavern. His talk is in great demand among Historical Societies throughout the state as well as among other likeminded groups, and while all of us well know the Golden Ball, his slides and descriptions add a new dimension to the understanding of the purpose and development of the Tavern as an institution.

At the business meeting, short reports will be made and the election of directors will take place. The terms of three directors expire: those of Mrs. M. Kirkbride Patterson, Erlund Field, and Edward W. Marshall. The continuing terms of the following directors are: 1978 Mrs. Dudley B. Dumaine, Brenton H. Dickson 3rd, Roy L. Dickson, Harold G. Travis, and 1977: John H. Bishop, Donald D. Douglass, and Homer C. Lucas. Mr. S. J. McDonald is Chairman of the Nominating Committee and any suggestions as to candidates for Directors or Officers will be welcomed by him.

Refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the meeting and it is hoped that a large audience will attend to hear Mr. Gambrill's rewarding presentation.

—Edward W. Marshall, *President*

EDITORIAL

WESTON'S ROLE IN THE NATION'S BICENTENNIAL

A complete and balanced review of Weston's observance of the American Revolution's Bicentennial will be our most important and immediate project. By unanimous vote of the Town in 1972 a committee comprising Donald D. Douglass, Mrs. Dudley B. Dumaine, Virginia C. Jones, Dr. Vera Laska, and Harold G. Travis, all Society charter members, was appointed by the Selectmen to plan and direct appropriate observance by the Town. It can be stated that from the outset, all of the many commemorations, individual, corporate, and community, reflected the best of Weston tradition.

With the slogan "In Weston, For Weston, By Weston", the Weston American Revolution Bicentennial Committee acted as over all catalyst and coordinator while fellow townsmen from every area and organization, — and of every age and stage, — of every school with excited children and exciting faculty leadership, — all combined to give an unprecedented demonstration of resources and resourcefulness. From the warm-up "Tea-Raid" on the Golden Ball Tavern through such thrillers as the Knox Trail Reenactment and the "Ben Franklin in Paris" musicale last January, Weston's countless projects and productions crystallized finally into the most spectacular day in the Town's long history.

"FAMILY DAY" on June 12th, 1976 brought us all together as one wholesome family when every resident from the youngest babe to the oldest citizen had "a piece of the action" and a share in friendly communion. After reviewing thousands of feet of moving pictures, listening to dozens of tape recordings, arranging literally hundreds of photographs, candid and professional, and in general absorbing anecdotes that must everywhere abound, we hope by our next issue to present more highlights and sidelights that will truly portray the inspiring story of how Weston so fittingly observed the 200th birthday of our great country.

A MOST APPROPRIATE GIFT

When making up your birthday and Christmas lists, don't forget to remember how fitting would be a copy of "*ONE TOWN IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS.*" It may be purchased each Wednesday afternoon at the Josiah Smith Tavern and regularly at the Weston Pharmacy. We are indebted to our fellow member, Edward O. Carlman, for handling such sales at his store without profit to himself. Co-authored by Messrs. Brent Dickson and Homer Lucas, the new book has received many laudatory reviews. Hundreds of members have already purchased their copies which will become more valuable as the years go by. A copy should be in every Weston home and on the shelves of libraries from coast to coast. Other publications of the Society are "*ONCE UPON A PUNG*" for bedside reading and "*WINDOWS ON WESTON*" as a tour guide, reasonably priced also.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep feeling of regret that we record the passing of Mrs. Robert A. Warren and John B. Paine, both longtime Weston residents and charter members of this Society. Each had made substantial contributions to the character and characteristics of the Town. We extend to the members of their families our most heartfelt sympathy as we simultaneously record our gratitude for the many tangible ways in which each gave us great support and encouragement.



THE WESTON BEACON
VALIANTLY GUARDED BY WESTON SOLDIERS
STOOD ON THIS HILL
DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR
ONE OF THE GUARDS WAS JONAS SANDERSON
WHO LIVED ACROSS THE STREET
TWO HUNDRED FEET SOUTH OF THIS SPOT

The most historical event of "FAMILY DAY" on June 12th was the dedication on Sanderson Hill conducted by the Parade Grand Marshal in a quiet mid-afternoon ceremony before approximately one hundred specially invited guests, committee members, and town officials. Following his brief address, the Dedicatory Prayer was given by the pastor of the Weston Baptist Church, and members of the Weston High School Band led in the singing of "AMERICA." As the group returned to the Town Green in cars and buses, the thoughts of all seemed to center on Rev. Mannierre's closing words: "We dedicate this memorial plaque, O God of our Fathers, asking that you renew right spirits within each one of us – spirits which will bring tribute not only to the sentinels who stood at the Weston Beacon on this very hill, but also bring glory to you and assure Liberty and Justice for all your children."

THE BEACON ON SANDERSON HILL

Remarks by Harold G. Travis on June 12, 1976, at the dedication on Sanderson Hill, Weston, Massachusetts, of the plaque at The Beacon Stone on the closing day of the town's commemoration of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution.

“HERE ON HISTORIC SANDERSON HILL’S western slope, at the juncture of two old roads, we gather on this memorable day in June, 1976, to dedicate a plaque that memorializes THE WESTON BEACON which during the American Revolution two centuries ago, stood guard over our destiny. We are indebted to our fellow-townsmen, Richard Robinson, for providing this handsome BEACON STONE AND PLAQUE. We are honored by the presence of many distinguished leaders of this Commonwealth. We welcome you, ladies and gentlemen, to our happy and peaceful town.

“Let us, for a moment in time, transport ourselves to this historic hillside two centuries ago. Today’s paved roads were but cartpaths from farm to farm. These tall trees had not yet sprung from the soil. These stone walls, still neatly patterned through this densely wooded hilltop, attest to crops that grew and cattle that grazed here in Colonial times. Reaching skyward, Weston’s beacon commanded a panoramic view that swept around the clock from Boston Harbor to Rhode Island to Sudbury, Worcester, Wachusett, Monadnock, Acton, Concord, and Malden. On dark and cloudy nights, how dank and lonely this spot must have been! In dead of winter with wind howling at sub-zero temperature and no sign of human company, where were cheer and comfort? Let us pause then, for an instant, to reflect on what our Sentinels at the Beacon faced night after lonely night to protect and ensure the success of our great cause.”

After carefully summarizing the contents of his article on The Weston Beacon in the BULLETIN of October 1974, speaker Travis continued:

“Weston’s own records of the Beacon are scant and incomplete. Efforts these past three years have been less rewarding than we had wished. With some professional guidance we have hunted for clues, digging and scratching through generations of compost. So far we have uncovered no mouldy hearth of musty ashes from oldtime fires, no iron kettle or crane, no ossified masthead, no remnants of an old bar or spar, no rocks of the beacon’s foundation and no rum bottles whose contents in those days brought comfort and protection from the coldest weather.

“SOMEWHERE WITHIN THE SOUND OF MY VOICE, the Weston Beacon stood! We must keep digging until we find traces of it! Today we can be thankful that it never had to be fired, and we can be grateful to these brave young Weston soldiers who kept their faithful vigil here, ready to sound the alarm: —

JONAS SANDERSON ’ ’ ’ ’ JOEL HARRINGTON ’ ’ ’ ’ NATHANIEL
PARMENTER , THADDEUS PEIRCE DANIEL RAND
and the sons of NATHANIEL FELCH SAMUEL LIVERMORE
THOMAS GRAVES and THOMAS RAND

“And now let the Plaque be unveiled and its message read, after which our prayer of dedication will seal its message forever.”

At this point, two great, great, great, great-grandchildren of Jonas Sanderson, Brian Bradley Sanderson and Susan Phyllis Sanderson, stepped forward and removed the covering from the plaque.



THE SANDERSONS WERE THERE!

Of Jonas Sanderson's nineteen living descendants, ten were on hand for the dedication of The Weston Beacon plaque on Sanderson Hill, and two of them brought their wives. Shown above, left to right, are William Bradford Sanderson II (b), Thelma Sanderson (a), Susan Phyllis Sanderson (c)*, Wayne Bradley Sanderson (b), Melinda Nelson Sanderson, William Bradford Sanderson III (c), Brian Bradley Sanderson (c)*, Trueman Sanderson (a), Norman Bradford Sanderson Jr. (b), Norman Bradford Sanderson III (c), Phyllis Orrill Sanderson, and Jeffrey Wayne Sanderson (c).

Key to above: (a) = great-great grandchild; (b) = great-great-great grandchild; (c) = great-great-great-great grandchild of Jonas Sanderson; * = Unveiled Plaque.

Another great-great grandchild of Jonas Sanderson is Mrs. Nelson H. Bayers of Washington, D.C. who through Trueman Sanderson has presented the Society with copies of two original deeds that are being kept in our Archives. One dated "the eleventh day of April A.D. one thousand seven hundred and seventy and in the tenth year of his Majesty's reign," conveys to Jonas Sanderson 45 acres with "the Dwelling house and the new half of the Barn standing thereon," and is signed by Josiah Coolidge. The other, dated "this twenty-fourth day of December Anno Domino one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three and eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America," conveys 20 acres from Moses Harrington and Mary Harrington ("her mark") which are described as "a certain tract of Pasture, mowing and wood land in Weston" abutting "said Sanderson." Any interested member may examine both documents in the Josiah Smith Tavern for further details.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Since last spring the following have joined our Society and are warmly welcomed: — June Holloway of Amherst, New Hampshire, Cornelia R. Storrow, Stonington, Connecticut, Messrs. Andrew Fiske of Shelter Island, New York, and Trueman Sanderson of Natick; Mr. and Mrs. S. Abbot Smith of Boston, and, from Weston, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ellicott III, Mr. and Mrs. William A. Gallup, Jr., Mrs. Parker W. Hastings, Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Nolan, and Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong A. Stambaugh.

THIRD GRADERS MEASURE BICENTENNIAL TREES

Sparked by articles written in the January and May issues, Mr. Hamar's class at the Brooks School last spring asked us to accompany them on a bus tour to inspect the twelve Bicentennial trees which, to that date, had been located within our Town limits. Accordingly on May 27th with their class advisor, fellow member Mrs. Raymond Paynter, we all had a great morning together. The children themselves in businesslike fashion, measured the three oaks at three feet above the most easily accessible and highest ground level. Circumference of the champion was 13' 11" on the Doyle's Skating Pond Road front yard and the runner-up at 11' 4" stands in the backyard of 111 Wellesley Street on the Case Estates. The second Doyle tree measured 9' 8".

Of the nine Buttonwoods (Plane or Sycamore) only one defied measurement by the eager youngsters who were stopped by a poison ivy growth that made the approach too hazardous. Others in the order of size, not necessarily age, were found to be "this long."

1. 216 Conant Road: 13' 3¼"
2. North Avenue opposite Dog Ranch: 12' 8"
3. 625 Boston Post Road, west of driveway: 12' 4½"
4. North Avenue short distance west of (2.) above: 11' 10"
5. Boston Post Road west of Christian Science Church: 10' 9"
6. 625 Boston Post Road, east of driveway: 10' 7"
7. South of 119 Park Road: 9' 8"
8. Boston Post Road east of Isaac Fiske Law Office: 8' 8"

Borings contemplated this fall will, we hope, establish more accurate age determinations. Meanwhile the stimulus that such research provides for our school children is exemplified in part by the following extracts from letters we received from those 21 ardent third graders:

"I didn't know that trees can still live when they are hollow. And I didn't know another name for sycamore is buttonwood. I never knew that those trees were so old."

"I liked the field trip very much. The most interesting tree was the sycamore. I hope some other field trips are with you."

"If it weren't for you, I would not have found out about the Burgoyne Elm. I have learned it is 16 feet and 11 inches. I appreciate you for giving up your time."

"I didn't know that the Burgoyne Elm is 227 years."

"I hope you take other children on field trips so they can have as much fun and learn all that I have learned."

Signed "Your tree fan", this little girl wrote: "I learned a lot like where the trees were located, that some trees are named in Latin, that sycamore trees live when they are hollow."



Annual Dues: \$5.00 per person, \$8 per family

Life Memberships \$200

Gift Memberships are suggested

Contributions to the Society are always welcome.

Checks should be made payable to Weston Historical Society, Inc.

and mailed to P.O. Box 343, Weston, Mass. 02193

President: Mr. Edward W. Marshall 893-7388

Editor of the "Bulletin": Mr. Harold G. Travis 899-4515

Due to advanced costs of printing and postage, the price for additional copies is now 50 cents each, obtainable by phoning Mrs. Bonner at 893-4346.